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**CHRIST CHURCH
METHODIST**

1961



CHRIST CHURCH METHODIST
Quarrier Street at Morris Street

CHRIST CHURCH

METHODIST

Charleston W. Va.

A Historical Sketch

1804 - 1961



By

ROY BIRD COOK

Charleston Printing Company
Charleston, West Virginia

PREFACE

This is an epitome of the history of the Methodist Church and of Christ Church Methodist, in particular, prepared at the time of the dedication of the new Education Center, November 26, 1961. This publication is intended to be a rather happy medium between a long detailed account of the church and one that is brief but still predicated on such factual information as is now at hand.

If we accept the date of January 1, 1804, as the first recorded Methodist meeting or the year 1815 as the first actual organization, it covers roughly a century and a half of time. It records briefly the activities of our particular branch of the Methodist Church in this region and gives at least passing mention of many of the leaders in the field during this time. Starting with a small frontier fort, known as Fort Lee in 1788, at the junction of the Elk with the Kanawha River, in the span of time mentioned there has risen a great city by 1961, surrounded by churches of many denominations devoted to the cause of Christianity. This church, as such, has made many contributions to the community and its people.

The story here recorded, brief as it may be, is a source of pride to those now living and a monument to the tireless work of those who now rest from the labors of many years. Long ago, someone wrote, "to live in the hearts we leave behind is not to die." To us the past speaks significantly as a prelude to the continuing service of this church and its people.

We are in great debt to Roy Bird Cook for his historical selection and skillful telling of the story of the people called Methodists. As the able author of this history, we feel that this has been a service of love.

Truman W. Potter

Nov. 1, 1961

THE STORY OF CHRIST CHURCH METHODIST

PROLOGUE

The story of Christ Church Methodist has as its source the great Methodist movement which swept the American continent in the days just prior to the Revolution. This, of course, revolved to a large degree around the teachings of the Wesleys and the many who espoused the religious theories they expounded, all of which is a part of the larger Methodist history—so large, in fact, that it cannot be recounted here. But a few facts from the over-all history do need to be mentioned in order to tie this local history into the whole story of Methodism.

As early as 1749 the French claimed the Ohio Valley. In the fall of 1770 Colonel George Washington and a small group of men who had served in the French and Indian wars were traveling in the lower Kanawha Valley. With Washington was Dr. James Craik whose family was to have a part in the history of the Episcopal Church in future Charleston. On up the valley, at Kelley's Creek, now Cedar Grove, the first settlement in the county was being made. While most of these people were massacred by the Indians, two names from the group are well known to this day: William Kelley, by the stream which bears his name, and Thomas Morris, as the grandfather of one of the most famous Methodist Bishops.

In 1774, General Andrew Lewis, with 1,100 Virginia militia, camped near the site of Christ Church on the way to participate in the Battle of Point Pleasant, October 10. Two years later in the very opening days of 1776, a year long to be remembered by all Americans, Freeborn Garrettson is said to have preached the first Methodist sermon in what is now West Virginia. This took place in Berkeley County, near present Martinsburg, and his labors led to the formation of the Berkeley circuit in 1778. The same year at Leesburg, on May 19, the sixth annual Methodist Conference was held, the first to be held on Virginia soil.

Fear and devastation from the military operations in the Revolution took their toll in the east as did Indian incursions in the west. But settlers continued to move over the mountains

and down the New-Kanawha valleys, eventually reaching the Ohio. These new settlers brought with them their own religions, one of the strongest, seemingly, being the Methodist belief. By 1780, a class of Methodists was formed in the lower Greenbrier Valley, influence of which reached to what was the west of that day. The local result was the erection in 1786 of the famous Rehoboth Church, two miles from Union, county seat of Monroe County. About this time, there came riding over the mountains no less a personage than Francis Asbury, who rode the ridges and the valleys in a great crescent from the Carolinas almost to the Ohio River. He visited Rehoboth in 1788 and here held three annual conferences, during the months of May in 1792, 1793, and 1796. His preaching and his activities led to a great surge of religious activity everywhere west of the Alleghenies. As he traveled through Greenbrier, as usual riding horseback, he noted in his Journal for July, 1790: "On my way, I premeditated the sending of a preacher to a newly settled place in the Kenhaway Country."

Out of the Greenbrier-Monroe regions in May, 1788, rode sixty Virginia Rangers commanded by the Clendenins, George and William, and with them rode their father, Charles. At the present location of Brooks Street and Kanawha Boulevard, a few feet from the site of Christ Church, they erected the frontier post of Fort Lee. It was to be an important military outpost and continued as such until the close of the Indian wars in 1795. Here, none other than Daniel Boone assumed command of the forces of the new county of "Kenhawa," created in the fort in October, 1789. During the years 1795 to 1800, there were about 60 inhabitants here. By way of comparison it should be added that at the same time Pittsburgh had less than 400 inhabitants and Cincinnati, at the close of the Indian wars, was a village of 500 people living in 10 frame houses and 94 log huts. By 1818, there were three Charles Towns within the state of Virginia. So it came about that the one whose post office was called Kanawha Court House in 1801 was changed to Charleston in 1818, but the post office remained Kanawha Court House until 1879.

James Quinn, early Methodist Circuit Rider of that day, said of this region at the turn of the century:

New and frontier as was the country and still subject to savage depredations, it was not a moral waste; for there

were laws, courts and magistrates. And in those days they whipped, cropped, branded and hung men for stealing and fined and imprisoned them for swearing and Sabbeth breaking.

Local court and church records both attest to the truth of these statements as the little town of Charles Town became Charleston and moved into the opening days of the 19th century.

METHODISM REACHES "CHARLES TOWN"

Many variations are to be found in the story of the coming of Methodism to Charles Town. The same may be said for the establishing of other denominations and, in fact, for much local history, for records of any kind were seldom kept in such frontier communities. However, the best account known of this early movement seems to be found in the *Ladies Repository*, "A Monthly Periodical Devoted to Literature and Religion," published in Cincinnati and New York during the middle of the 19th century. In the issue for January, 1852, there appeared an article written by one Samuel Williams who lived for a time in Charles Town, then later moved to Chillicothe. In this article he recounts the story of how a Mrs. Williams (his mother) and her family came over the mountains from the east, the journey from Lexington, Virginia, having required twenty-five days. After this long and dangerous trip, they crossed the Gauley River on a primitive bridge, then continued down the valley through Malden, saw the salt works there, and finally came to the fine Ruffner estates, which were located in what is now the east end of Charleston. They arrived at the public square, which fronted on what is now the Kanawha levee, on November 12, 1803. Here they found a village of 150 people living along the center of lower Charleston of today. Front Street along the river was lined with sycamore and pawpaw trees. Back of this, where Virginia Street now runs, was a street then called Back Street on which were located a row of log homes and a small, one-story courthouse near the site of the present seat of justice. A stream ran through the back section and joined the Kanawha River a short distance above the mouth of the Elk. On up the Kanawha stood the two-story log house and the smaller log huts and the palisades of old Fort Lee.

These newcomers seem to have been tireless workers for the Methodist cause and one of their first questions upon arriving was to find out if there was any activity on the part of this denomination in the area. From James Spurlock and Thomas Buffington, settlers on the Savage Military land grant, which

is now Guyandotte and Huntington, they learned that the Rev. William Steele of the Little Kanawha and Muskingum circuit preached once a month at the mouth of Guyandot River, a distance of about 45 miles from Charles Town. An invitation was immediately sent to Rev. Steele to come to Charleston. This he accepted and in the Williams' home, on January 1, 1804, he held what seems to be the first Methodist service conducted in present Charleston. Rev. Steele from then on began coming once a month to conduct similar services. During that year the circuit was divided, Guyandotte circuit being established as a separate circuit, with the Rev. Asa Shinn as the appointed circuit rider. This preacher's fame spread far and wide and he was later to be one of the leaders who founded the Methodist Protestant Church. Late in 1804, Rev. Shinn was followed by Rev. William Pattison, and he in turn was succeeded by Rev. Abram Amos, who, in 1806, organized a class at the home of Michael Newhouse, about four miles up Elk River.

While all of these circuit riders held services here, it appears that the first organized society was formed in 1815 by the Rev. Henry Bascom, who had been appointed to the Guyandotte circuit in 1814. This early minister deserves more than passing notice, for he later became chaplain of the House of Representatives, in Washington, and while he was born in the north, he adhered to the southern movement when separation came in 1844, and later he became one of the most noted bishops of that branch of the church. Thomas A. Morris, born in the general location of Kanawha City, was appointed as a junior preacher and served this area for a few months in 1815-16. He, too, became a widely known Methodist Bishop, did extensive writing and was noted for his administrative ability.

CHARLESTON'S FIRST METHODIST MEETING HOUSE 1821-1834

The little town grew slowly. Much of its growth depended on the salt industry around Kanawha Salines, or Terra Salis, the Malden of today. In 1818, on what is now Quarrier Street, just below Hale, there was erected Mercer Academy, a Presbyterian institution named for Charles Fenton Mercer, which was destined to have much influence on the cultural life of the community. The next year, 1819, it is recorded that the first Methodist Quarterly Conference was held in the little old courthouse. It met on a Saturday and was presided over by the Rev. Alex Cummins. It is said that the meeting adjourned rather hastily when a new-fangled contraption called a steamboat arrived at the mouth of Elk. The question of whether this boat, the Andrew Donnally, was the first steamboat to so arrive is disputed by the Eliza, which did come up to the levee over Elk Shoals in 1823.

A few notes from the later writings or memoirs of the early ministers give us brief bits of information concerning the situation of that time. Francis Wilson recorded as follows:

About the 10th of October, 1819, I commenced preaching in Charles Town and five joined the Society. Tuesday following seven; near this on a funeral occasion, twenty joined Since the above in Charles Town and its vicinity, fifteen have been added and in various parts of the circuit there has been considerable increase.

At the quarterly conference mentioned above, fifteen adults and infants were baptized. A second quarterly conference was held in November of 1819, and Rev. Cummins reports that on Saturday afternoon and night he had about 250 in attendance; and further, that on Sunday morning a "profitable love feast was held; at eleven o'clock about 500 people attended preaching and sacrament with great solemnity and tears of joy and sorrow were mingled with shouts of praise—five joined the Society." He also says that on Monday night he preached to a crowded audience of attentive listeners at the Salt Works!



FIRST METHODIST MEETING HOUSE, 1821-1834

Painting by Elizabeth Mathews Wallace

In the meantime, it appears from the best records that Mr. James Truslow (1778-1830) and his family were much interested in the furtherance of the Methodist cause. At his own expense he had erected a small log building, about 16 x 34 feet in size, which he presented to the congregation. This building was located across the lot, east of Mercer Academy, at what would now be the north side of Quarrier between Hale and Dickinson streets. Other congregations used the building for services.

The property on which this first church building was erected did not belong to the Truslows, but to one James Wilson. However, on May 24, 1822, James Wilson and his wife, Jane, of Kanawha County, for the consideration of one dollar, transferred to John Snyder, David Snyder, James Truslow, Phillip Miller and John Trudgain a lot, "being the same lot on which a meeting house built for the said Methodist Society now

stands on." (See Deed Book F, p. 69.) It is described as "beginning at a stake N. 49 E., one pole from Titus south corner, thence with the Titus line N. 49 E. forty feet, to a stake then leaving Titus line S. 46° 20' W. 40 feet to the beginning." The boundaries are, of course, not clear for the Titus line is obscure, but the deed did provide that in case the Society ceased to use the same as a house of worship that the property was to revert to the said Wilson. What happened later is not disclosed.

Charleston was growing and progressing. Methodist records disclose that a Sunday School was started. The town had established a library. A meeting had been held in the little courthouse to form an Episcopal church.

In 1826, there arrived on the local scene one C. R. Baldwin, a brilliant lawyer, but a man much opposed to any formal religious belief. However, on February 7, 1833, he joined the Presbyterian Church for undisclosed reasons. From this group he resigned on May 3, stating as his reason that he "now prefers the Methodist Church." This may be the reason he gave the Presbyterians, but the records show that soon thereafter he married Elizabeth, daughter of James Truslow. Later he was to become a widely known Methodist minister, and it was largely through his efforts that a movement was started to build a second and more substantial Methodist church here.

The local newspaper, the *Western Virginian and Kanawha County Gazette*, in its issue of July 19, 1826, carried the notice that there would be a Methodist camp meeting to last a week, starting Thursday, September 7. Further the notice stated that it would be held on Two Mile Creek, back of the plantation of Daniel Ruffner. Rev. Henry Fernandis, who was making the plans, announced that arrangements had been made with Daniel Ruffner to pasture all horses. (Ruffner built and ran the noted Holly Grove Inn. Erected in 1824, it still stands today at 1710 Kanawha Boulevard, and here Henry Clay, Andrew Jackson and many other noted people have been entertained.)

The Methodist Conference which convened in Hillsborough, Ohio, in October, 1826, sent Rev. John H. Power as pastor to Charleston. In 1830 Governor Floyd, of Virginia, rode out to Charleston to look into matters political and educational. And that same year Bishop William Meade, of the Episcopal Church,

made an inspection trip in the Kanawha Valley. So it appears that others from the eastern side of the mountains were showing an interest in local developments, and that the Methodists were important enough to be assigned a regular minister.



ASBURY CHAPEL, 1834-1872
Painting by Elizabeth Mathews Wallace

ASBURY CHAPEL—VIRGINIA STREET M. E. CHURCH

1834-1872

As the town of Charleston grew so did the Methodist congregation. This naturally brought about a desire for a new and bigger house of worship. So we find that on August 21, 1833, John P. Turner and his wife, Melina, sold to Thomas C. Thomas, William S. Hutt, John Trudgain, James T. Starke and Charles R. Baldwin, trustees, for the sum of \$320.00 a lot "beginning at a stake on the upper side of the cross street leading from the Kanawha river toward the dwelling house of John Faure, on the line of said cross street ten feet from the line of said Faure and said John P. Turner, and then along and bounding on said cross street in the direction of the Kanawha river one hundred and three feet to a stake, then parallel with the back or second street sixty-six feet and thence back from the river one hundred and three feet to a point ten feet from the line of said Faure and thence to the point of beginning . . . , leaving between the line set forth and the said Faure a strip 10 feet long being part of the lot upon which the new brick house of John P. Turner now stands." This deed further provides that the trustees were to erect a house of worship for the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, and "to preach and expound God's Holy Word therein." (Deed Book H, p. 343.)

On September 11 of the same year further land transfers seem to have been made. In Deed Book H, p. 606, we find that John P. Turner and his wife deeded to the above-named trustees a piece of property located on Main or second street back from the Kanawha River (evidently present Virginia Street) a lot which they had purchased from Tobias Ruffner, but which was at that time occupied by Stephen Shepherd. The lot is described as being "located on the North East side of the street and extending to the lower corner of James C. McFarland's lot, thence at right angle with said street one-hundred and forty-seven feet to the line of John Welch, thence down fifty-five feet and 10 inches with the said Main or Second Street, then to the said street by line in course parallel with

the upper line one hundred and forty-seven feet and thence along and bounding on said street fifty-five feet and 10 inches to the beginning." The reason for this second deed is not disclosed, and it is interesting to note that the records state "Recorded original of this deed, May 29, 1873, H. C. McWhorter." (Mr. McWhorter at this date was president of the Church Board.)

Regardless of why two purchases were made, the property was located at about present 610 Virginia Street. On it was erected a substantial two-story brick edifice, with a full basement. It had a balcony surrounding the interior on three sides. Due to financial troubles, construction extended through the late days of 1833 and into the summer of 1834. The cost of the building was \$5,000.00, quite a large sum for those days. The dedication was conducted by Rev. William Young in 1834, the exact date not being known.

Three men deserve much of the credit for the building of this new church home. Rev. Charles R. Baldwin, mentioned previously as the son-in-law of James Truslow, seems to have put his untiring efforts into the project. Henry New, whose name is known in connection with the salt industry above Charleston, is also given much praise for his labors. And the third member, Luke Wilcox, gave generously of both his time and money. Mr. Wilcox had come from New York to the Valley in 1816 and continued to live here until his death at Marmet in 1854. In 1836 he presented to the new Asbury Church a beautiful silver communion set which was used until August 29, 1904, and which is now one of the historical heritages of Christ Church.

The congregation of Asbury Chapel was to witness and participate in affairs new and strange, national and local, in the first two decades following the occupation of its new home. The General Conference, 1844, met in New York City. By this time feeling on the subject of slavery, and especially slavery within the church, had become very bitter. As a result, a southern group of Methodists held a separate meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, in May, 1845. This was the beginning of the actual separation of the church, and its effects were to be felt in the Charleston church. Many local people were in sympathy with the southern movement and soon a separate



COMMUNION SET
Presented to Asbury Chapel in 1836 by Luke Wilcox

congregation was formed. This Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was led by T. M. McFarland, and, for a time, met in the old courthouse. In 1858, the new group built a church on what is now the southeast corner of Capitol and Virginia streets. It was a very fine brick structure and, while it was not destined to have a long life, the whole operation took many members from the Virginia Street congregation.

During the year 1848-49, the whole Kanawha Valley was afflicted with a cholera epidemic. People of today are scarcely able to realize what this meant. A letter from the Rev. Andrew Jackson Lyda, who was pastor at Asbury Chapel that year, written to Mr. William B. Mathews in 1899, gives a vivid picture of the situation. He writes, in part, as follows:

At first session of the Western Virginia Conference held in Wheeling July 4, 1848, I was assigned to Charleston and the Salines and set off for first time as a half station. I reached Charleston by boat as the bells were ringing on the first Sabbath after the Conference. I quartered with

James Truslow, a kind family and a pleasant home. We worshipped in old Asbury Chapel on Virginia Street now standing as a monument to its remarkable history. It was the days of slavery and white people occupied the auditorium and the colored folks the gallery, . . . In May 1849 the cholera commenced its fearful ravages in Charleston. I was the only minister in the stricken town except the Rev. James M. Brown of the Presbyterian Church who was stricken down himself which threw the entire ministerial work on me. I was with every person who died in town without regard to creed, sect or color. I ministered to them while sick, dressed them when dead, preached their funeral sermons and consigned them to their graves. I saw imminent danger, forgot self, considered my duty, trusted God and stood at my post.

Among the worthy laymen associated with Charleston Methodist during this pastorate were E. W. Newton, editor of the only paper published in the town (Kanawha Republican); Matheneys, J. A. Truslow, J. J. Ritter, Philip Morgan, William Key, John Slack, Sr. Mrs. J. J. Ritter was the oldest member. Mrs. Dawson was the first victim of the cholera to die and passed while the bell was ringing for the hour of worship as appointed by the President (Zachary Taylor) that God might be entreated to stay the awful plague. Mrs. Summers, sister (sister-in-law) of Hon. George Summers and the mother of Dr. Edgar Summers deserves special mention. . . . My term closed a conference year of 16 months, October 5, 1849. At the conference held in Charleston September 1885, after an absence of 35 years I was returned by special request for the second time.

Rev. Lyda was born in Hancock, Maryland, 1821, and lived until 1900. He was admitted to the Ohio Conference in 1843 and his first appointment in Western Virginia was at Point Pleasant in 1847. As he states in his letter, he was then sent to Charleston the following year, and was returned, by request, for a second period of service in 1885. During the intervening years he served as chaplain of the Third Volunteer Infantry and of the Sixth (West) Virginia Cavalry. He also became the first chaplain of the Grand Lodge of Freemasons in the State and it might be added that he lived long enough to see medical science eradicate the horrible disease which caused him so much anguish during his first stay in Charleston.

By 1851 the records indicate there were 350 Methodists in Charleston. We do not have a record of how this number was

divided between the Asbury Church and the Southern branch. The records from 1851 to 1868 now extant are fragmentary indeed. For two years during the Civil War there is nothing to be found. The few pages available show some membership lists, marriages and baptismal records. Some scattered notes are of special interest. Great credit is given to the church work performed by James Truslow, a local businessman, and to E. W. Newton, newspaperman and teacher. It is recorded that two Negro classes, "No. 1 and No. 2," were established within the church. Also there is mention made of an African Chapel. The earliest baptismal record is that of William Woodall, of North Charleston. The minister officiating was the celebrated Gordon Battelle, later to be known for his efforts in helping to form the state of West Virginia. The first marriage listed is that of John Umon and Louise Swayne, the date being September 22, 1851. The so-called firsts indicate merely that they are the firsts in records now available.

Other entries indicating how much our church customs have changed might be mentioned. In the 1850's applicants for membership were placed on probation and not all were approved. Now and then it seems that some members "walked disorderly and refused to be reproved." Other members were cited for "evil speaking" and several were actually expelled from membership, but for what reasons the records fail to inform us. All of these bits of our early history have been arranged in some order and are now a part of the church archives. Old and worn, water stained and, in some cases, seared on the edges, they are still priceless records of our church a hundred or more years ago.

The days were approaching now which were to try men's souls. The Civil War which divided the nation was to do the same thing to the 1,800 people now making up the population of Charleston. Dr. Spicer Patrick and George Summers, Kanawha County's representatives to the Virginia Assembly, went to Richmond to fight secession, but, failing, they returned to start devising a way to keep Western Virginia in the Union.

Rev. R. A. Arthur was the Methodist Episcopal pastor at Asbury when ex-Governor Henry A. Wise, of Richmond, moved into town with his Confederate troops in June, 1861. From here he moved on down to Scary Creek, below Coals

Mouth (St. Albans), where he engaged in a spirited battle with the Federal troops, led by General J. D. Cox, on June 17. Wise retreated from the valley on July 21, burning bridges behind him. The Federal troops moved into the valley and, on August 3, Colonel J. C. Vance set up headquarters in the courthouse, establishing Camp Norton in the area thereabout. So one might say that even Asbury Church services were conducted under military surveillance. A few notes in records of this year show the early effects of the war. Some members are listed as "withdrawn-Secession," others such as "Henry Young, 1861, in army," and "Jane Grogan, refugee from Greenbrier county." All are indicative of the situation. John Alsbury and six other members of the church seem to have joined the Second (West) Virginia Cavalry. The church building and its members suffered great damage in the flood which occurred in August. It was a difficult year for Asbury Chapel, but the Rev. Henry Stevens, who was to relieve Rev. Arthur in the fall, had even greater problems ahead of him in the coming year.

During the spring and summer of 1862, the Federal troops occupied the town. On Saturday, September 13, Colonel J. A. J. Lightburn (later to become a Baptist minister in Weston) started his retreat down the Kanawha, pursued by the Confederate troops led by General Loring. They passed Asbury Chapel early in the morning, crossing the one and only bridge then across Elk River. By three o'clock in the afternoon the Confederates were shelling the Federals, with Asbury Chapel and the main part of Charleston caught in the cross fire. Only one corner of the church was damaged but by nightfall 95 combatants had been killed, wounded or were missing.

Assuming that a church service was held on Sunday, September 14, which is doubtful, what a situation confronted the minister, the churches and the people!

From the front door of Asbury Chapel one could see the smoldering ruins of the Southern Methodist Church not more than 500 feet distant. The loss of this building was to retard that church for many years. Looking toward the Kanawha River one would have seen the smoking walls of the four-story Kanawha House, owned by J. C. McFarland. The completely destroyed bank building on the corner of what is now Sum-

mers Street, together with the ruins of Mercer Academy, added to the scene of destruction. The Presbyterian Church building escaped major damages but suffered from the troops and horses swarming in and around it.

The Federal troops were back in control of Charleston by November, 1862. They established headquarters at Camp Carr White, directly across the Kanawha River. With these troops, mostly Ohio units, were two loyal Methodists: Colonel Rutherford B. Hayes and Lieutenant William McKinley, who frequently attended church services at Asbury. Both, of course, were to become President of the United States.

In 1863 the Federal troops built Fort Scammon on what is present Fort Hill and continued to hold the town. This meant that many soldiers were in and around the vicinity until the end of the war, and some of these showed definite interest in the Methodist Church. A report of Asbury, made in January, 1864, shows a definite increase in membership. Lieutenant Colonel John Wesley Shaw of the 34th Ohio Volunteer Infantry and twenty-eight soldiers, mostly from his regiment, were listed as applicants for membership. Several other new members appear to have come from the Simmons Battery of Artillery (from Kentucky) and from the Second West Virginia Cavalry. These made quite an addition to the membership rolls of so small a church.

For the two years 1863 and 1864 no local church records are available. From other sources it appears that Rev. Henry Stevens continued as pastor to the end of 1863 when he was replaced by his brother, Ashby Stevens, who served until 1865. Henry Stevens entered the Union Army as a chaplain and at the end of the war went to Tennessee where he became a well-known doctor.

Besides serving as a place of worship, Asbury Chapel seems to have served many other worthwhile purposes in the community. In 1864 J. T. Brodt started one of the first local free schools in its basement. Also classes for Negroes were held here. C. P. Snyder was establishing a military school and used the building for a time. In 1872 when the Constitutional Convention was held in Charleston, Dr. John P. Hale, the mayor, made arrangements for the meeting to be held in Asbury Church. It was agreed that the city would pay \$140.00 a month

for the use of the building. So it was that in Asbury Chapel our present State Constitution was drafted. A resolution of the Convention shows that a delegation was appointed to call on the city fathers to thank them for providing the body with a proper place in which to meet. There seems to be no proof that the city paid the agreed-upon sum for rent, but State Voucher No. 34 discloses that the State of West Virginia did pay to the trustees \$477.79 for the use of the building.

During the seven years following the close of the Civil War, Asbury Church seems to have gone along in rather a routine fashion. No outstanding event is to be found in its records. But in 1872 the Rev. Franklin Ball arrived as the new pastor, and almost immediately began urging the erection of a new church building. On April 19 of that year a general meeting was held and the congregation was persuaded to approve this plan. The decision made that day was to cause the church many problems in the years ahead.

The first steps in the building plan were to dispose of the old church building and to provide a site for the new. The Presbyterian Church also had suffered division due to the causes which brought on the Civil War. In Charleston the so-called Southern branch was organized as the Kanawha Presbyterian Church and in 1872 was holding its meetings in the Senate chamber of the first Capitol building in Charleston, located at the corner of Capitol and Lee streets. Three leaders of this group, Dr. L. L. Comstock, John W. Sentz and John Claypool, acting as individuals, agreed to buy Asbury Chapel for \$4,000.00. The sale was completed late in the year and the Kanawha Presbyterian congregation held its first service therein on February 16, 1873. In fact this continued to serve as a church home for this group until the present fine church building, located above McFarland on Virginia Street, was occupied in 1885.

The Methodists held their last service in old Asbury on Sunday, December 15, 1872. Services were held both morning and evening. The Rev. Ball preached the main sermon, but many members participated in the two services. One of the finest features of this farewell program was a paper, "Recollections of Methodism in The Kanawha Valley" prepared by the venerable Greenbury Slack. Mr. Slack was unable to

present his own paper which was read by George Wesley Atkinson, later to become Governor of West Virginia, and a man prominent in church affairs during his entire lifetime.

After the old church building ceased to serve the Presbyterian congregation, it was used for a number of business enterprises until it was razed in 1903. By a strange coincidence this historic old building was torn down the same month Bishop Randolph Foster died. He, at the age of seventeen, in September, 1837, had preached his first sermon in this church, and later dedicated its successor.



STATE STREET CHURCH, 1873-1908
Painting by Elizabeth Mathews Wallace

STATE STREET M. E. CHURCH

1873-1908

In order to obtain land upon which to build a new church, the Trustees bought from M. Kaufman and Amelia, his wife, lot No. 3, on the corner of State Street (now Lee) fronting 75 feet on State and 108 feet on Court "adjoining lots 2 and 4," with the use restricted to the Methodist Episcopal Church. (Deed Book 28, p. 354.) The Trustees at this time were: P. W. Morgan, G. Ritter, G. Slack, J. J. Ritter, G. High, G. W. Atkinson, J. W. Cracraft, H. C. McWhorter, and John Slack. The amount paid for the lot was \$825.00.

On this site was erected a brick building, of mixed architectural design, much of which is still standing. Even though it has been remodeled for other purposes, the name State Street Methodist Church is still clearly to be seen inscribed in the tower.

Delays caused the construction of the building to proceed very slowly. The Sunday School section was occupied by March 2, 1873, services being conducted that day by Dr. Alexander Martin. Dr. Martin was later to become president of West Virginia University and, still later, head of the Methodist institution which is today DePauw University.

When completed it was a very nice building. The interior was attractive and spacious. A good pipe organ was installed. The formal dedication took place February 8, 1874, with Bishop Randolph Foster officiating. However, the membership was only 118 and the debt, in proportion, was quite large. Within a very short time it was realized that a bad location had been selected which detracted from the pleasure the congregation should have had over its new home.

Other problems also faced the Methodists. The first parsonage, on what is now Quarrier Street, had been sold in 1872 to the Kanawha Presbyterian Church along with Asbury Chapel, so it was necessary to obtain a new home for the pastor. In 1889, largely through the efforts of the Ladies Aid Society, a residence was acquired at what is now the corner of Summers

and Donnally streets. Part of this lot was taken when Summers Street was widened, making it undesirable. So, in 1899, the Trustees bought from Moses Frankenberger, I. Schwab, and L. E. Strauss, trustees of the Hebrew Educational Society, the property just east of the church site on State Street, for the sum of \$2,500.00. The lot fronted 75 feet on State Street and extended back with the church line 108 feet. On this lot was erected an excellent brick parsonage.

By 1905 it became evident that a new church location should be obtained. A committee on location was appointed. After several months of investigation this committee reported on April 2, 1906, that a desirable site would be at the corner of Quarrier and Morris streets. At this time the congregation numbered 422, and the prices of land, together with the cost of a structure such as desired, seemed almost more than should be attempted. However, an opportunity came to dispose of the State Street Church which provided a cash sum with which to start negotiations. On August 20, 1908, the church was sold to the congregation of Sons of Jacob (now B'nai Jacob) for \$14,000.00. The organ was retained and later removed to Simpson Methodist Church. The bell and pulpit were transferred to Blundon Chapel, in present Vandalia, a suburb of South Charleston, the following year. Some other church belongings were moved to the Y. M. C. A. But before the church was formally given over to its new owners, a "Farewell and God-speed" service was held.

Rev. John Beddow presided at this last meeting on September 16, 1908. William B. Mathews, Secretary of the Official Board, presented a splendid resume of the operations of the church on State Street. Judge Henry C. McWhorter, President of the Board of Trustees, talked on "State Street Since 1872." The minister, Rev. O. D. King, in a prophetic mood, talked on "Eastward Ho!," commenting upon the decision which had been made to move uptown. Mrs. Mary Robins McGwigan, known to generations of school children and founder of a most unusual Sunday School class, read a poem titled, "A Generation's Shrine of Praise." Many others participated in the services.

The State Street congregation after September, 1908, and until November 27, 1910, was without a church home. During

this time the facilities of the Young Men's Christian Association building, on Capitol Street, were used. The auditorium was used for regular church services and what other space was available was used for other church activities. Records of this period were not carefully kept, but now and then one does find some amusing entries. One of such was an argument as to whether women should be required to wear hats in church. It is scarcely necessary to report the outcome of this discussion! In spite of the difficulties under which the church operated during this period, it is interesting to note that by April 7, 1909, the membership had grown to 615. It was at this date that the title First Methodist Episcopal Church was formally adopted.



CHRIST CHURCH METHODIST
Painting by Elizabeth Mathews Wallace

FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL—CHRIST CHURCH
METHODIST

Christ Methodist Church

1909-1961

It may be said that the decision made in 1907 to move to a new location marked a turning point in the history of this church. The town of Charleston had been growing—its population having reached 39,000 when the 1900 census was taken. There were now 14,000 Methodists in the vicinity. Other Methodist churches had been organized, Morris Memorial, Blundon Chapel, Lawrence, and Sixth Street, to mention a few of them. Being the largest and oldest, it was natural that the activities of the First Methodist should be followed with more than passing interest. Hence we need to follow the various steps involved in the building of its new home which has continued to serve that purpose up to and including the present time.

On March 30, 1907, Caroline Q. Smith, et al, sold to the State Street Methodist Church and to H. C. McWhorter, George W. Atkinson, S. S. Moore, J. Mark Young, L. E. McWhorter, Enoch Carver, A. S. Thomas, John Carver and W. B. Mathews, Trustees, a lot at Quarrier and Morris streets, for the sum of \$15,000.00. The lot fronted on Quarrier 111 feet and on Morris 200 feet. (Deed Book 107, p. 228.) It might be said that this lot was secured largely through the efforts of Dr. H. D. Clark, the pastor.

The story back of the building of the church is of great interest. It represents the untiring labor of many people. It would be unfair to single out any one person for special commendation, for all gave to the limit of their ability. As usual, there was a long and continual struggle to finance the project. As early as 1906, Dr. Clark started a book which was labeled, "Lot Fund Building Fund Cash Book." This book eventually contained some eighty pages of names of contributors, running from groups such as The Ladies Aid Society and The Young Ladies Aid to hundreds of individuals. Among those listed are people from Mexico City, Wheeling, and industrial con-

cerns in Philadelphia and New York City. Sums given range from one dollar to \$4,000.00, the latter amount being donated by ex-Governor George W. Atkinson, whose generosity and labor for this church are constantly recalled to us by the beautiful memorial window in the west side of the auditorium. Some money was received from rentals of the old parsonage property to the ever-expanding telephone company. Many donated services and some rather unusual notes appear in the minutes of the Board for this period, such as items about "lumber from the old barn floor," and another which had to do with the "moving of the old barn," all of which concerned the preparation of the lot for building thereon.

The location having been decided upon in 1907, the Board then appointed a committee on plans. This committee, composed of H. C. McWhorter, W. T. Williamson, W. T. Eisen-smith, David Dick and W. B. Mathews, set to work. In August, 1908, the committee visited a church in Athens, Ohio, and by some circumstance rode into Athens in a private car with William Howard Taft, then campaigning for President of the United States. The Minutes report that they looked over the church there and heard a good speech. Later, in February, 1909, a visit was made to Cleveland where an inspection was made of the Windermere M. E. Church. As a result of their study and investigation, it was finally decided to erect a building similar to the Cleveland structure and J. W. Fulton of Uniontown, Pennsylvania, who had designed that church, was employed to do likewise for the Charleston church.

The building committee was composed of W. D. Isaac, A. S. Thomas and George E. Breece, with W. T. Williamson serving as Chairman and W. T. Eisensmith as Secretary. David Dick acted as Superintendent. The finance committee, headed by William B. Mathews, consisted of the following: Judge G. W. Atkinson, Judge H. C. McWhorter, Gov. William E. Glasscock, George W. Wakefield, Morris P. Shawkey, P. A. Simpson, and George E. Thomas, Secretary.

The final report of the planning committee was made to the Board, May 28, 1909, and on June 21 a contract was made with A. F. Withrow Company for erection of the building. The cost, originally agreed upon, was to be \$65,000.00 but by the time the work was completed the cost, including the price of the

lot, was \$98,654.38. Ground for the foundation was broken June 23, 1909.

The cornerstone was laid on October 17. By order of the Board it bore the dates 1815-1909. Within the stone was placed a box containing a roster of the members of the Sunday School and other papers and records of the church. The ceremony was conducted by Bishop Earl Cranston, assisted by Rev. John Beddow, District Superintendent, and the pastor, Rev. O. D. King. In spite of a pouring rain, a large crowd attended and \$5,102.00 was contributed that day.

The financing of such a large church was quite a problem. All sorts of efforts were made to raise money. In July the venerable Bishop John Hamilton, of Weston, came to town and made a stirring appeal for funds. In October of that year the Board records show that a social was held at the Governor's Mansion which netted \$200.00. Finally, it was decided to execute a deed of trust on the property and to sell bonds based upon this security. The bonds sold very well; many were bought by men who had no interest in the church but who considered them a good investment. On February 15, 1911, the cash book showed an item, "paid out for men's supper and financial campaign, \$216.99." In March, the old parsonage on State Street was sold to Cora Washington for \$8,000.00, which was a big help toward the total goal. During the fund-raising campaign someone came up with the slogan, "Ponder, persuade, promise, procure, pull, push, pay, pray." All of these efforts produced enough to continue the construction, but the last debt on the structure was not paid off until March 1, 1919.

As the construction went forward, there was to be seen taking shape a beautiful building of Victorian Gothic architecture, made from Berea (Grey) sandstone, fronting 96 feet on Quarrier Street, and 130 feet on Morris. The tower, 102 feet in height, was modeled after Magdalen College Tower, at Oxford, England. The red tile roof accentuated the charm of its general beauty, while beneath it there appeared gradually a cloister-like loggia with welcoming entrances on each street. The auditorium was octagonal in form, its ceiling of groined gothic shape rising seventy feet at the center.

An organ architect, W. H. Donley, from Indianapolis, came and drew plans for the organ. This was bought from the Hann-

Wagner-in-Weickhardt Company of Milwaukee, the price to be \$5,300.00. A unique feature for that time was a set of chimes in the tower which could be controlled from the organ keyboard, a distance of 120 feet. These chimes, donated by Mr. and Mrs. E. Callahan, were supplied by Walter H. Durfee Company of Providence, Rhode Island, and cost \$2,200.00. The echo organ was donated by Mr. and Mrs. William B. Mathews. A baptismal font was given by Walter C. Price, a local druggist, on March 29, 1911. The pulpit furniture was contributed by Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Williamson.

The memorial art windows were installed by Rossback Art Glass Company. The magnificent window *Christ with Mary and Martha* was given by George W. Atkinson, and recalls his many years of faithful service to this church. The window depicting *Christ with the Doctors* was given by A. S. Thomas and his family, which included the late Frank Thomas (1897-1955) and others still very active in the work of Christ Church. A. S. Thomas served in official positions in the church from 1888 to 1931, and is honored in the naming of the Library at Morris Harvey College. The circular window, *Garden Scene*, was presented by H. S. Moore (1875-1925) and family.

Smaller memorial windows carry the names and perpetuate the memory of William Thomas and Lucy Francis Kiger, Miss Susan L. McFarland, Mrs. Harriet Y. Slack, John Isaac, Emma V. Pottier, William A. Key, Nancy A. Spurr, Julia E. McWhorter, Henry C. McWhorter, H. E. McWhorter, William Gibson Gates, Mary E. Michelson, and two with just the family names of *Anderson* and *Clark*.

In December, 1909, the Official Board adopted a resolution asking that the portraits of prominent members be donated to the church and that they be installed in the new edifice to be unveiled during the dedication of the new structure. As a result fine oil paintings of Governor W. G. Atkinson (1845-1925), Judge Henry Clay McWhorter (1836-1913), and Judge Ira Robinson (1869-1951) were made by J. C. Adler. Also, an excellent oil painting of Mrs. Mary McGwigan (1845-1924) was contributed.

The Board of Trustees installed a tablet at the Quarrier Street vestibule which reads as follows:

In honor of the Ladies Aid Society whose devoted work made possible the purchase of this lot and the erection of this edifice for the worship and the Glory of God. This tablet was placed here by the Official Board, 1911.

The records show that on February 10, 1910, the contractors were urged to complete the Sunday School room as soon as possible and "to make it attractive, beautiful and convenient." The first meeting was held in this room on November 10, 1910. Rev. O. D. King preached the sermon to quite a large audience. Eleven new members were received that day. In December following, an infant child of Oliver Nutting Jennings became the first person baptized in this area of the building.

The real dedication of this church was observed during the week of February 26-March 5, 1911. On Sunday the week of observance began with a sermon preached by Bishop Joseph F. Berry, the auditorium being used that day for the first time. At this service Sarah Esther Mathews, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Mathews, was baptized. Today Sarah Esther is Mrs. Carl K. Gilchrist, wife of the Chairman of the Board of Trustees. In the afternoon of that day a Charleston District Methodist meeting was held. On Monday the Ladies Aid Society held a reception to which the public was invited to inspect the new building and the memorial tablets. At this time the portraits which had been presented were unveiled. On Tuesday there was an organ recital, and on Wednesday an inspirational meeting, the address for this day being given by Dr. C. G. Doney, President of Wesleyan College. On Thursday, Dr. John Beddow, District Superintendent, presided over a Fraternal Meeting. Friday, Rev. George R. Grose spoke, and on Saturday a Social Service meeting was addressed by Bishop W. F. Anderson, of Chattanooga, Tennessee. On Sunday, March 5, Bishop W. F. Anderson officially dedicated the building.

In 1912 a new parsonage was erected at 108 Morris Street. David Dick was the contractor for the work and the cost was \$10,460.00. This house continued to serve as a parsonage until 1947 when the present parsonage on Kanawha Boulevard was acquired. Today it continues to serve the church as a Sunday School annex and is called Fellowship House.

The minutes of the Board meetings for many years show that Christ Church participated in and was influenced by

events of both religious and secular nature. On March 28, 1913, a special collection was taken for the flood sufferers along the Ohio River. In 1915 the centennial of Methodism in the Kanawha Valley was observed. In September, 1918, an every-member canvass was cancelled due to the epidemic which was sweeping the town. This was, of course, the "flu" epidemic which added to the problems created by World War I.

It was announced in August, 1919, that Miss Minnie McWhorter had presented to the church the communion set originally given by Luke Wilcox, but which it seems had been in the possession of her father, H. C. McWhorter, through the years. George W. Atkinson and William B. Mathews were named as a committee to take the necessary steps for exhibiting and displaying this set.

The church in its new home showed a continual growth even though new Methodist churches were being formed within the area. By 1920 the population of Charleston had reached 40,000 and the Christ Church membership was reported to be 928. The budget for that year was \$31,551.00. In January, 1921, it was decided that some repair work needed to be done. Provisions were made for redecorating and for the installing of new furniture and lights.

The needs of the church building were again evaluated in 1928. On April 28 a committee composed of Donald Blagg, William B. Mathews and Phil M. Conley, which had been appointed to study the situation, filed a report. The committee noted that the building had been in use eighteen years; that it was built when the membership was about 500; and now, with a membership totaling almost 1,300 the church needed more room. The committee also reported that a new organ was needed. The suggestions were that the parsonage be moved to a site across the alley—on Morris Street—and that an extension be constructed toward the river, utilizing the present parsonage lot. J. C. Fulton and Company, who had designed the original building, was employed to draw up plans for this enlargement, but, when an estimate of \$75,000.00 was made on the addition, the plans seem to have been filed away and forgotten.

Through the years many people made contributions and donations of various sorts and kinds. On Sunday, March 26,

1936, a special program of acceptance was held when the family of Thomas J. Robson, a well-known layman, donated 500 hymnals to the church. The program was conducted by Rev. Minor Sprague and Phil M. Conley.

For many years there had been a movement afoot to bring about a union of the three branches of the Methodist church in America—the Methodist Episcopal Church; the Methodist Episcopal Church South; and the Methodist Protestant Church. This movement culminated in a Uniting Conference held in Kansas City, Missouri, on April 26, 1939. Much as the union was desired, it did bring about a number of local problems. William B. Mathews headed a committee from the First Methodist Church to work out a solution to these problems. The names of the local churches had to be considered immediately since there had existed for many years a duplication in names between the First Methodist Episcopal Church and the First Methodist Episcopal Church South. After due consideration, both churches agreed to abandon their titles and each to select a new name. Hence the church which had been the southern branch adopted the name St. Mark's Methodist Church, and this church took the title Christ Methodist Church, both names being duly approved by the quarterly conferences. At some later date the title of this church seems to have been transposed to Christ Church Methodist, and that title is used in general church proceedings but the legal title remains, adopted in 1939—Christ Methodist Church.

It is not out of order to observe here that William B. Mathews deserves special commendation for his unceasing work to bring about church unification. Mr. Mathews was born at Round Bottom, near Moundsville, Marshall County, in 1866. He moved to Charleston and as early as 1898 became affiliated with State Street Church. From that time until his death in 1943, Mr. Mathews served the church in every possible way. He served on many committees, worked unceasingly for all major improvements, and was for many years a member of the Board of Trustees. In private life he served as Clerk of the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia. His daughters, Mrs. Carl K. Gilchrist and Mrs. Harry Wallace, and his grandchildren are active members of the church today.

Through the generosity of some members, a set of electric

bells was purchased and installed in the tower in March, 1946, as a memorial to the men and women of the church who served in World War II. This carillon, consisting of 45 bells, can be operated from the console of the organ, and each day may be heard throughout the main part of the city as weary workers are making their way home.

In keeping with the church's policy of continuing improvement and expansion, a new parsonage property was purchased in October of 1947. This house, situated at 2018 Kanawha Boulevard, was purchased from C. F. Zimmerman for \$45,000.00 (Deed Book 808, p. 463). Since then two major projects of redecorating and furnishing have been carried out—and one might add that most of this work has been done through the efforts of the Woman's Society of Christian Service.

As the years passed on, the organ, installed when the church was built, began to show signs of wear, and was not in keeping with the outstanding chancel choir of which this church has long been proud. So, plans were instigated for the purchase of a new instrument. A contract was awarded to Hillgreen and Lane Company, of Alliance, Ohio, for the installation of an excellent three manual organ at a cost of \$35,000.00. It was dedicated on November 20, 1950, to the memory of Charles T. Bettinger (1888-1949), a faithful, lifetime member of Christ Church. On November 21, a recital by Frederick Merriott, of the Rockefeller Memorial Chapel, of Chicago, gave the public an opportunity to hear the new organ. The music of the church, under the direction of Charles Greybill for the past 40 years, continues to be one of the outstanding features of Christ Church.

The church continued to grow. The need had long been felt for some sort of an educational building in which the younger generation of church people could have proper room for their activities. With this idea in mind, the Trustees authorized the purchase of additional property adjoining the church lot on Quarrier Street. On November 10, 1952, negotiations were closed with Mrs. Mary Gavin for a lot 50 by 191 feet, at a price of \$50,000.00, (Deed Book B1025, p. 463). Then an aggressive campaign was started to raise money for a building. The campaign was headed by Rev. Moorman Parker, and by May, 1954, sufficient funds had been raised or pledged to award the

contract for such a building. The plans for the addition were made by Charles Haviland; the contract was awarded E. L. Harris and Sons, and the price was set at \$319,397.00. Actual construction was started immediately and the building was ready for use by September 1, 1955.

The building, planned to match and tie into the architectural design of the main church, was to be English Gothic, of stone to match the church construction. The total size was to be 60 by 162 feet, with two stories in front and three in the rear. The front part of the structure is a chapel, the rear planned for educational, recreational and social activities and for the use of the Sunday School.

The cornerstone was laid November 21, 1954, with proper services conducted by the pastor, Dr. Joseph Clare Hoffman. In the stone were placed copies of the plans, by Charles Haviland; photographs, by Roy Bird Cook; and documents and papers relating to the church, by Carl K. Gilchrist. The trowel used in the actual placing of the stone was provided by Captain Charles Braden and is of special interest since it was the same trowel used for setting the cornerstone at the noted Wesleyan Chapel at Bury, England.

As is usual with all church construction, the financing of this building was to be a problem. Rising costs of recent years and the expense of furnishings and equipment far exceeded the original amount estimated for the building. Several drives were necessary before the debt was amortized. But a final "Forward Step" Campaign, put on in 1959, with a goal of \$100,000.00, brought the liquidation of the debt within sight. Now, with pledges practically all paid, the debt has been paid off and the time for formal dedication has arrived.

However, a living church must grow, and with this in mind the trustees made arrangements to purchase additional property in September, 1959. At this time the next lot adjoining the church property on Quarrier Street, known as the Davis-Bradford property, was purchased. (Deed Book 1292, p. 559.) The house which stood on this lot was razed and the lot is now available for limited parking and the use of the Day School Kindergarten. In the meantime, even before it is dedicated, the new Education Building seems inadequate for the needs of the various church groups. So, quite a sum has been

spent in making usable certain areas in the basement of the main church, and in remodeling and making usable the old parsonage on Morris Street, now called Fellowship House.

In keeping with the pattern followed in the main building the new Education Building has several beautiful memorial windows. On the Quarrier Street side one is dedicated to the Woman's Society of Christian Service; one to Mrs. Roy Reger donated by the Reger Sunday School Class, and one to the Warne family donated by Mrs. H. Rus Warne. On the lower, or west side, is the beautiful window *Ascension* in honor of the Eisensmith family donated by Mrs. W. T. Eisensmith. The window *Christ Calling His Disciples* in honor of Mr. and Mrs. W. S. McGuire was donated by their daughter Mrs. Truman Potter and Dr. Truman W. Potter. Two windows in the Ministers office were donated in memory of Daniel Matthews by Mrs. Daniel Matthews. The upper corridor window is in honor of Mr. and Mrs. David Dick, donated by their daughters Mrs. William F. Goshorn and Mrs. J. A. Hudson.

In the main corridor of the new building is a tablet which reads as follows:

TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND
IN HONOR OF
THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF CHRIST CHURCH
METHODIST WHO SERVED THEIR COUNTRY IN
WORLD WAR II AND THE KOREAN CONFLICT

DEDICATED TO
THE SACRED MEMORY OF THOSE WHO GAVE
THEIR LIVES THAT THIS NATION UNDER GOD
MIGHT LIVE

Robert E. Bedell
Frank Shores Cochran
John Lee McKee

Charles W. Rogers
John A. Shanklin III
Robert W. Thomas

EPILOGUE

So comes to a close this short epitome of the history of Christ Methodist Church or Christ Church Methodist, depending upon the way you wish to use the title. One hundred and fifty-seven years of history has been made since the founders of this congregation first gathered in the home of Mrs. Williams, on January 1, 1804, to hear the Methodist doctrine expounded by one Rev. Steele. The first meeting house, a small log cabin, donated by one member, situated on a dusty or muddy pathway which today is Quarrier Street, soon inspired enough people so that a chapel was built one street nearer the river. Other denominations finding their place in the town were attracted to nearby locations until the street actually took the name of Church Street for a time. This location satisfied the needs through the Civil War when it again seemed expedient to enlarge and expand. Even though the move proved to be an unwise one, it did show the spirit of the church. The fact that this location at Court and State (Lee) streets was abandoned so soon proved that the church evaluated the situation, saw that the town was moving eastward, and decided to move that way too. Taking advantage of a good sale, purchasing a lot in an entirely new location, surviving several years without a church home, the First Methodist Episcopal Church never ceased to grow and expand its influence.

Finally, and as it now appears permanently, the church settled down on the corner of Quarrier and Morris in its beautiful new building. This did not indicate that it had ceased to grow or to keep in step with the times, which is proved by the fact that it is now ready to dedicate its new Education Building, and also is shown by the acquiring of additional property for future expansion if and when such is indicated.

Through the years, back almost to the achieving of American independence, these people called Methodists have made their presence felt in this town and this area. This influence cannot be estimated in the ever-expanding building program or in the membership statistics given herein, but rather in the other activities which the descendants of that early congregation

have carried on. New churches in rural and suburban areas have been helped; missionaries in both home and foreign services have been supported; ministerial students have been given financial help. The church as a body, and its individual members, have been among the foremost citizens in the community, helping and supporting with all their resources the cultural, educational, and eleemosynary endeavors of the area. And what does all of this mean for the future! Certainly today and in the future the members of this church have a heritage to maintain. When problems arise, and discouragements seem overwhelming, courage to carry on these traditions can be drawn from the memory of those who faced floods and epidemics, wars and disasters, even division within the church body, but came through triumphant to make The Methodist Church one of the strongest denominations in West Virginia today.

MINISTERS

The following is the list of the Methodist Episcopal Pastors of this valley, until Charleston was made a station, and of Asbury Chapel, State Street Church, First Church, and Christ Church:

1804	William Steele	1811-12	Samuel West
	Asa Shinn	1812-13	Samuel Brown
1804-05	William Pattison	1813-14	John Cord
1805-06	Abraham Amos	1814-15	Henry B. Bascom
1806-07	John Clingan	1815-16	John Dow
1807-08	Frederick Hood		Thos. A. Morris
1808-09	John Holmes	1816-17	Stephen Spurlock
1809-10	Joseph Bennett	1817-18	Samuel Demint
1810-11	Jacob Turman	1818-20	Burwell Spurlock

METHODIST MEETING HOUSE

1820-21	Francis Wilson	1826-27	John H. Power
	Samuel Hindman	1827-28	Isaac C. Hunter
1821-22	Isaac Collord	1828-29	John Ulin
	Isaac Reynolds	1829-30	William Herr
1822-23	Francis Wilson	1830-32	James C. Taylor
1823-24	Joseph D. Farrow	1832-33	R. O. Spencer
	William McComas		D. G. Deeter
1824-25	John H. Power	1833-34	A. B. Stroud
1825-26	Henry S. Fernandis		D. Reed

ASBURY CHAPEL

1834-35	William Young	1837-38	John G. Bruce
	James W. Finley		Randolph S. Foster
1835-36	Wm. Young	1838-39	John G. Bruce
	C. R. Baldwin		Francis A. Timmons
	A. M. Alexander	1839-40	David Kemper
1836-37	Edward D. Roe		Lovell F. Harris
	J. Newson	1840-41	James Armstrong
	Wm. Anderson		Martin P. Wolfe

1841-42 Philip Nation	1849-51 Alexander Martin
Joseph Baringer	1851-53 Gordon Battelle
1842-43 Wm. T. Hand	1853-55 James L. Clark
Samuel Maddux	1855-56 Timothy B. Taylor
1843-44 Wm. T. Hand	1856-57 R. L. Woodyard
John W. Fowble	1857-59 J. S. Patterson
1844-45 Thos. Gorsuch	1859-61 R. A. Arthur
Wm. H. Southerland	1861-63 Henry Stevens
1845-46 Samuel Brown	1863-65 A. Stevens
George West	1865-67 W. E. Williamson
1846-47 John W. Fowble	1867-68 G. W. Richmond
T. Dillon	1868-69 A. Hall
1847-48 H. Z. G. Adams	1869-71 E. W. Ryan
B. N. Spahr	1871-72 James A. Kibbe
1848-49 A. J. Lyda	

STATE STREET CHURCH

1872-73 Franklin Ball	1887-91 Asbury Mick
1873-76 W. M. Mullenix	1891-96 S. J. Cotton
1876-78 E. W. Ryan	1896-98 A. B. Riker
1878-79 S. B. D. Prickett	1898-02 M. F. Compton
1879-82 G. C. Shaffer	1902-04 S. V. Leech
1882-85 J. A. Fullerton	1904-05 William Anderson
1885-87 A. J. Lyda	1905-07 H. D. Clark

FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL

1907-11 O. D. King	1921-28 C. R. Havighurst
1911-16 J. E. Bird	1928-33 W. V. Mallalieu
1916-21 W. C. Hartinger	1933-37 Robert Bagnell

CHRIST CHURCH METHODIST

1937-55 Joseph Clare Hoffman
1955- Truman W. Potter

PRESIDING ELDERS

The Presiding Elders or District Superintendents of this territory have been the following in the years named:

1804-05 Wm. Burke	1865 D. H. K. Dix
1806-08 John Sale	1866-67 R. A. Arthur
1809-12 James Quinn	1868-71 G. W. Richmond
1813-16 David Young	1872-75 J. M. Powell
1817-18 Samuel Parker	1876-78 S. E. Steele
1819-20 Alexander Cummins	1879 C. E. Manchester
1821-25 John Brown	1880-83 H. C. Sanford
1826-29 Zachariah Connell	1884-89 J. M. Warden
1830-33 I. C. Hunter	1890-95 C. B. Graham
1834-36 Robt. O. Spencer	1896-1901 D. S. Hammond
1835 J. Delay	1902-04 J. H. Hess
1836 Wm. Young	1905-10 John Beddow
1837-39 Elijah E. Field	1911-13 J. W. Engle
1840 I. C. Hunter	1914-19 A. J. Hiatt
1841-42 Samuel Hamilton	1920-25 E. J. Westfall
1843-45 John Stewart	1926-28 D. C. Pickens
1846-48 David Reed	1929-34 J. C. Buckley
1848-50 H. Z. G. Adams	1935-39 D. Ralph Dunn
1851-54 Gideon Martin	1939-41 Walter Given
1855-58 James L. Clark	1941-45 Frank L. Shaffer
1859-60 A. A. Reger	1945-50 J. B. F. Yoak, Jr.
1861 T. H. Monroe	1950-55 John W. Hollister
1862 G. J. Nixon	1955-61 Ross Culpepper
1863-64 Henry Stevens	1961- L. H. Burns



JAN 75



N. MANCHESTER,
INDIANA

